

Protecting Alaska's Wilderness...

The

ARCTIC TRUTH



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LET'S CLEAN HOUSE

"As the Congress is on the eve of a historic debate about the future of energy policy you ought to say let's clean up the abuses that are taking place in existing programs that are going to continue and possibly be expanded under the legislation that the Congress will consider...this is time to get control of this runaway stallion, we are talking about millions certainly billions in the cumulative costs of this program and these practices just take your breath away."

- **Senator Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) on the Senate floor, 9/10/08**

OTHER RECENT DOI SCANDALS

- Deputy Secretary Stephen Griles is now serving hard time for lying about being Jack Abramoff's "guy in Interior."
- Deputy Assistant Secretary Julie MacDonald resigned for "personally reversing scientific findings, changing scientific conclusions to prevent endangered species from receiving protection, removing relevant information from a scientific document, and ordering the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to adopt her edits." (as stated in a Union of Concerned Scientists report)
- Lax bureaucratic oversight allowed (and continues to allow) 24 companies to produce oil in the Gulf of Mexico without paying billions of dollars in royalties to the federal government.

DOI'S MMS: BUSH'S GIFT TO BIG OIL THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

It's now official, our government really is in bed with Big Oil. We're not talking fancy rhetoric here or overzealous propaganda. According to a report by the Inspector General of the Department of Interior, a group of public servants entrusted with collecting in-kind royalty payments from oil companies operating on our public lands, were actually bedding down, doing drugs and accepting gifts from oil company employees.

Between 2002 and 2006, fully one-third of the In-Kind Royalty Division, based outside Denver, Colorado, had improper relations with and received a wide array of gifts and gratuities from Big Oil. Two of the 19 employees cited received gifts on more than 135 occasions from Shell, Chevron, Hess and Denver-based Gary Williams Energy Corp, the LA Times reported. In return, the MMS employees shared key information, helped fix contracts and worked part-time as oil consultants – blatantly shunning the ethics rules that govern all federal workers.

This week's bombshell is the latest in a series of reports about MMS. "During the past year, in September and again in May, inspector-general reports have portrayed MMS as a nest of conflict, lapsed controls and potential criminal conduct," reported the Denver Post.

Despite these ongoing revelations, the Bush administration is using MMS to give Big Oil access to as much of our nation's public land as possible before a new administration moves into the White House. Just this week, Big Oil's friends in Congress are gearing up to introduce legislation that would open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and other special places to oil drilling. And, Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne has decided that MMS will develop a new five-year plan – the government's map to oil and gas leasing over the next five years - a few years early in order to streamline Big Oil's access to millions of acres of sensitive offshore area.

In Alaska, sensitive marine habitat in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas is already available for leasing. Kempthorne hopes to use the new five-year plan to ensure that nothing – like the future of the beleaguered polar bear and other endangered marine species – stands in Big Oil's way.

To read more about MMS and Big Oil visit:
www.ShameOnBigOil.org



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